

STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. I-23-99

May 28, 1999

The following is offered in response to your request for interpretation of Section 315.2 of the 1995 CABO One and Two Family Dwelling Code portion of the 1999 State Building Code. You specifically ask about the concept of “equivalent graspability” which is not included in the language of the above referenced section but which is included in Exception 2 to Section 1022.2.4 of the BOCA National Building Code/1996 portion of the 1999 State Building Code, previous and later editions of the CABO Code and in final drafts of the International Building Code and the International Residential Code.

Although it appears that the omission of the term “equivalent graspability” from the 1995 edition of the CABO Code may have been in error, no interpretation of the State Building Code can add provisions that do not already exist. I intend to explore this issue with the Codes and Standards Committee towards the end of revising the language in the code. Until that is done, however, it is not possible to issue an interpretation that allows use of the concept of “equivalent graspability” when the language is not included in the code section.

I suggest that until this issue is resolved, you apply for a modification of the code to use Section 1022.2.4 of the BOCA Code mentioned above for stairway handrails in dwellings constructed under the 1995 CABO portion of the State Building Code.

Editor’s Note: The April 7, 2000 Amendments to the 1999 State Building Code revised the wording of Section 315.2 of the 1995 CABO One and Two Family Dwelling Code to allow handrails that provide equivalent graspability.